

Accreditation Results
(Accreditation Results for School of Veterinary Medicine)

Hokkaido University, School of Veterinary Medicine
(Cooperative Veterinary Education Program)



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: National	Location: Hokkaido, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2022	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2030)	

Accreditation Results
for the Cooperative Veterinary Education Program between
Hokkaido University School of Veterinary Medicine and
Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine

The educational mission of the Cooperative Veterinary Education Program between Hokkaido University School of Veterinary Medicine (Hokkaido University) and Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (Obihiro University) is to “provide an international standard of veterinary education that integrates the two institutions’ educational resources to create a joint veterinary program otherwise unattainable by a single university.” Under this mission, the Cooperative Veterinary Education Program offers high quality veterinary education, leveraging the strengths of each institution, namely companion animal medicine and infectious diseases of Hokkaido University, and production animal medicine, meat and food safety of Obihiro University. In addition to the shared educational mission, each veterinary school stipulates its own goal for the joint program based on the mission and purpose established by the respective universities. Obihiro University’s Cooperative Veterinary Education Program aims to train “veterinarians who possess a global perspective and a sense of awareness of a broad range of issues, and who can thrive in a variety of fields, in other words, veterinarians who specialize in the field of clinical veterinary medicine related to the prevention and diagnosis of animal diseases, or public health including zoonotic infections.” The educational goal of Hokkaido University’s Cooperative Veterinary Education Program is “to develop new generations of veterinarians with a well-rounded character, a strong sense of ethics and international perspectives, as well as researchers who can adopt a pioneering approach to veterinary medicine” by imparting specialized knowledge and skills in veterinary medicine, with the graduates “expected to contribute to the maintenance and improvement of animal health, the improvement of public health, food safety and the development of life sciences.”

The cooperative program’s education and research activities are carried out to achieve the goals and objectives described above. In the comprehensive participatory clinical training course, for example, a list of “day-one competencies” that students should acquire is defined and used to monitor and evaluate student

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learning in a logbook format. Other efforts to improve clinical education include the Skills Lab made available for students to hone their clinical skills through repeated practice, along with training opportunities of night-time and emergency veterinary care for both companion animals and industrial animals. To assure the quality of education, the Cooperative Veterinary Education Program has put in place a quality assurance system led by the Programme Executive Board between Hokkaido University School of Veterinary Medicine and Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine as well as a mechanism to use student feedback for teaching improvements. These efforts are producing remarkable outcomes, with the joint program gaining full accreditation by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) in AY2019. This accreditation sets a positive example for other universities, and the two veterinary schools are expected to continue to develop their current efforts, leading to improvement and innovation of Japan's veterinary education, especially in the areas of clinical and public health education.

Furthermore, under the joint program each university undertakes activities that build on their respective strengths. Obihiro University, for example, conducts tests, diagnostics, and cutting-edge research in collaboration with outside organizations through its centers and institutes, including a well-equipped medical facility for industrial animals, the Field Center for Animal Science and Agriculture, the National Research Center for Protozoan Diseases, and the Diagnostic Center for Animal Health and Food Safety, which is an ISO/IEC17025 certified facility. Hokkaido University in turn carries out research on global challenges, such as the prevention and control of zoonosis diseases through the International Institute for Zoonosis Control, One Health Research Center, and an animal testing facility certified by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC International). These centers and institutes are used not only for veterinary education, but also for social contribution purposes, such as academic lectures and seminars, which is commendable.

Other notable features include Obihiro University's Practical courses in Pathology, covering a wide variety of animals and providing abundant practical experience with students undertaking the entire process of diagnosing injured animals from antemortem and pathological exams to case reporting. One unique feature of Hokkaido University is the initiative to promote internationalization

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through the credit transfer program established in partnership with five overseas veterinary institutions.

The certified evaluation and accreditation highlighted a number of strengths as described above, but it also identified a number of areas for improvement. One suggestion for improvement that applies to both universities is the promotion of diversity in the faculty organization, such as increasing the percentage of females among all full-time teachers. There are also institution-specific suggestions for improvement, with Obihiro University being advised to publish the “Degree Conferral Standards” and the “Curriculum Policy” stated in the Cooperative Veterinary Education Program’s diploma policy and curriculum policy, respectively, on its website and in the course registration guide. Hokkaido University should work to reduce the faculty’s workload as some teachers are burdened with an excessive teaching load.

Going forward, the Cooperative Veterinary Education Program should continue its self-study efforts for improvement and reform, and further assure and enhance the quality of its veterinary education program (bachelor’s program) to nurture and develop its unique characteristics.